

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 139270  
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66011  
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-----160145Z 085126 /73  
O 160033Z JUN 77  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE IMMEDIATE

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FOR USDEL CSCE

FOL RPT MOSCOW 8455 ACTION SECSTATE 14 JUN 77 QUOTE

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USE MOSCOW 8455

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS:PGOV, CASC, UR, US  
SUBJ: TEXT OF EMBASSY PROTEST ON TOTH JUNE 14 DETENTION

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF EMBASSY PROTEST OF SOVIET  
DETENTION OF LA TIMES CORRESPONDENT ROBERT TOTH JUNE  
11. PROTEST WAS DELIVERED TO MFA DEPUTY CHIEF USA  
DIVISION V.V. MIKHAILOV JUNE 14 AT SAME TIME MIKHAILOV  
DELIVERED SOVIET PROTEST (SEPTTEL). TEXT WAS LEFT BEHIND  
AS NON-PAPER.

BEGIN TEXT: THE EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
PROTESTS THE DETENTION OF ROBERT TOTH, CORRESPONDENT  
FOR THE LOS ANGELES TIMES, BY SOVIET AUTHORITIES ON  
JUNE 11.

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THIS ACT INTRODUCES A NEW ANDEVEN MORE DISTURBING  
ELEMENT INTO WHAT SEEMS TO BE A PERSISTENT EFFORT BY  
SOVIET AUTHORITIES TO HARRASS AND INTIMIDATE AMERICAN  
CORRESPONDENTS IN THE EXERCISE OF THEIR PROFESSION.  
SUCH ACTIONS CANNOT BE CONSIDERED IN THE BEST  
INTERESTS OF NORMAL US-USSR RELATIONS. THEIR  
IMPACT ON PUBLIC OPINION IN THE UNITED STATES

WILL CLEARLY NOT BE FAVORABLE TO THE SOVIET UNION.

FURTHER, THE EMBASSY CONSIDERS THIS ACTION AGAINST MR. TOTH TO BE INCONSISTENT WITH COMMITMENTS UNDERTAKEN BY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT THROUGH ITS SIGNATURE TO THE FINAL ACT OF THE CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE WHICH CALLS FOR THE PARTICIPATING STATES TO INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOURNALISTS TO COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY WITH THEIR SOURCES, AND REAFFIRMS THAT THE LEGITIMATE PURSUIT OF THEIR PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY WILL NOT PENALIZE JOURNALISTS.

THE EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS THAT MR. TOTH WAS APPROACHED THE MORNING OF JUNE 11 BY SEVERAL PERSONS WHO, ALTHOUGH REFUSING TO IDENTIFY THEMSELVES, FORCIBLY APPREHENDED HIM WITHOUT PROVIDING ANY GROUNDS FOR THEIR ACTION.

AFTER ARRIVING AT MILITIA STATION NO. 17, MR. TOTH'S REQUEST TO SPEAK IMMEDIATELY AND DIRECTLY WITH THE US EMBASSY WAS DENIED, AND THE EMBASSY WAS SUBSEQUENTLY INFORMED OF HIS DETENTION ONLY THROUGH AN OFFICIAL OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. WHEN A STATEMENT WAS READ ALLEGING THAT A DOCUMENT WHICH MR. TOTH HAD RECEIVED FROM SOVIET CITIZEN VALERY PETUKOV CONTAINED "SECRETS", MR. TOTH WAS NOT ALLOWED TO EXAMINE EITHER THE DOCUMENT, WHICH HE HAD NOT READ, OR THE ACCUSATORY STATEMENT.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE INCIDENT--WITH MR. TOTH BEING APPREHENDED BY UNIDENTIFIED PERSONS WHILE MEETING A SOVIET ACQUAINTANCE IN A PUBLIC LOCATION, THE MEETING HAVING BEEN ARRANGED BY TELEPHONE LESS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THAN THIRTY MINUTES BEFORE THE APPREHENSION; THE APPREHENSION OCCURRING BEFORE MR. TOTH HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO EVEN LOOK AT THE DOCUMENTS HE HAD RECEIVED FROM MR. PETUKOV, AND WHICH MR. TOTH BELIEVED WOULD CONTAIN SCHOLARLY INFORMATION ON THE SUBJECT OF PARAPSYCHOLOGY; THE PRESENCE OF SOVIET REPRESENTATIVES OF THE KGB, MFA/PRESS SECTION AND THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES AT THE MILITIA STATION BEFORE AN EMBASSY OFFICIAL WAS NOTIFIED--AROUSE CONSIDERABLE SUSPICION OVER THE MOTIVATIONS OF THIS ACTION, AND SUGGEST THAT THIS IS BUT THE LATEST AND TO THE PRESENT MOST SERIOUS STEP BY SOVIET AUTHORITIES TO HARRASS AND INTIMIDATE US CORRESPONDENTS DURING THE EXERCISE OF THEIR PROFESSION. END TEXT.  
TOON

UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Drafter:** JKORNBLUM  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Subject:** TEXT OF EMBASSY PROTEST ON TOTH JUNE 14 DETENTION  
**TAGS:** PGOV, CASC, UR, US, (TOTH, ROBERT)  
**To:** BELGRADE  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/56c67c7b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
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